

relax in style

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The Comma Group's stunning new residence in Daylesford, Victoria combines design and style with idyllic surrounds for the ultimate country retreat to pause, relax and escape.



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ABOVE:
 Matt's artwork features in the Daylesford house and complements the interior

Crafted by designer and artist Matt Martino, Comma is positioned around the natural slope of the land towards Lake Daylesford and nestled amongst the mature chestnut and apple trees. "I wanted to create the ultimate country retreat - a place that feels homely and familiar while distinctly different in its look and feel," says Martino.

Comma: Daylesford's four bedroom house comes complete with an eat-in, country style kitchen, large living and dining area, open fireplace and return verandah looking onto half an acre of land and rocky creek bed.

Located along the circular driveway and separate from the main residence, 'The Stables' provides additional private accommodation, ideal for an intimate couple's retreat or a luxury honeymoon suite

complete with a king-size, four-poster bed and free standing bath.

When selecting a location, The Comma Group looks for somewhere easily accessible with a strong culinary reputation and a focus on local produce and food. "Above all, the location must be aesthetically inspiring, somewhere which has something truly special about it that will resonate with families, couples and children," Martino says.

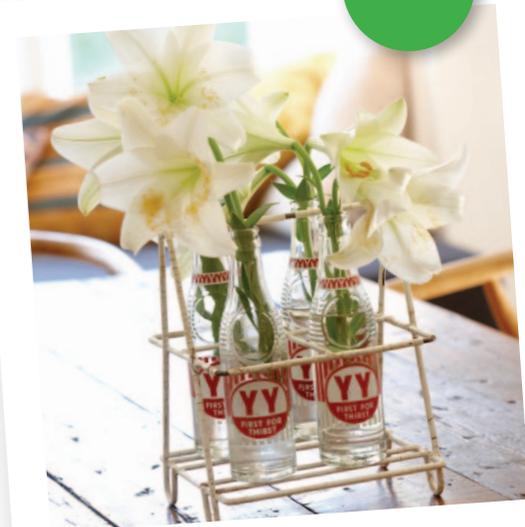
With an additional property in Byron Bay, New South Wales due for completion in early 2011, The Comma Group's spectacular design set amongst natural surroundings will continue to work together to provide an unrivalled holiday experience.

The Daylesford property is positioned in a picturesque, quiet and private location while still within 800 metres of Lake Daylesford, the Daylesford Botanical Gardens and is two minutes

walk to the main drag, Vincent Street.

Comma: Daylesford sets itself apart from other rental properties as Martino has not compromised on design, finish or furnishings within, delivering the same attention to detail and style that would be expected in one's own home.

The interiors of both the Residence and Stables are adorned with original artworks, designer pieces and daybeds that give you that feeling of ►





STAY A WHILE...

Comma: Daylesford is able to accommodate groups of up to 11, as well as more intimate couple retreats. Rates start at \$550 per night (Residence) and \$250 per night (Stables – weekdays only), with a two-night minimum stay on weekends.

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www.thecommagroup.com

designer profile

We talk to Matt Martino, the highly creative and talented interior designer behind Comma: Daylesford.

What was your first job and what career path have you taken since?

I studied as an architect but never qualified. I have designed houses, interiors and exteriors for about 15 years. I then designed, set up and ran a bar called Lionel, and now do our own design projects and paint, holding a couple of exhibitions a year.

Where do you get your inspiration?

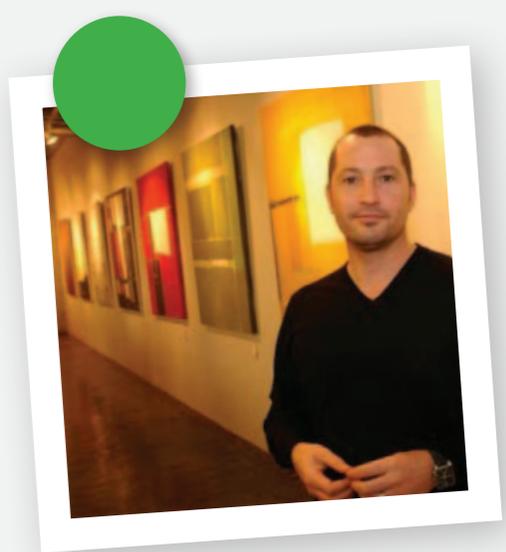
Books, magazines, now blogs a lot. I love reading about all types of design and ideas, especially about lifestyles. I like to be inspired 'between the lines', i.e food magazines are a great source of colour, styling and design/ photography.

How would you describe your decorating style?

My style is a genuine mix of old/ new, designer and stylist, comfort and function. I love Connecticut style for its understated simplicity and Australian lifestyles (all types, especially when it comes to specific climates). I am less about architecture now and more about design. Architecture is about inventing. Design is a broader term that takes in the way we live. That excites me.

What is your favourite vintage find for Comma: Daylesford?

My favourite vintage find is the old wrought iron daybed/ banana lounge I found at Camberwell market. I had a dark grey flannel over-stuffed cushion made for it. Perfect chair – it sits in the stables at the end of the bed tucked



into a dormer window.

Any decorating tips?

Buy what you like. Put it strategically in a room, consider its appearance, use and appeal. Be brave. The best interiors are ones that get a reaction. Think about the 'out there' dresser – people always love their style, they don't have to copy it. This is particularly relevant to colour, don't wimp it.

What's your next project?

Comma2, a place just off the beach in Byron Bay. The house will be a Moroccan-inspired house with Australian beach sensibilities. Think thick rendered walls, exposed rafters, built in daybed/caves, concrete floors, a walled swimming pool and shutters. All two minutes from the front beach in a quiet bush setting... caahhhhh.

Check out Matt's website at www.mattmartino.com

home.

Martino's design has drawn inspiration from the interiors of country homes and boutique hotels worldwide. Many of the furnishings for Comma: Daylesford were sourced from local secondhand dealers and flea markets providing a less contrived, but eclectic feel to the interior. "More like the interior of a home that has evolved over a lifetime," he says. ■

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY DIANNA SNAPE
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